

THIRTY-THIRD
ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

BOARD OF MANAGERS

OF THE

MASSACHUSETTS COLONIZATION SOCIETY,

PRESENTED AT THE ANNUAL MEETING,

MAY 27, 1874.

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1874.

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MASSACHUSETTS COLONIZATION SOCIETY.

PRESENTED AT THE ANNUAL MEETING, MAY 27, 1874.

The MASSACHUSETTS COLONIZATION SOCIETY held its Thirty-third Annual Meeting in Boston on Wednesday, May 27, 1874. The Annual Report of the Board of Managers, prepared by Ex-Governor EMORY WASHBURN, was read by him and accepted. The Treasurer's Report was also read and accepted. The officers for the year ensuing were unanimously elected: Hon. G. Washington Warren succeeding Ex-Governor Washburn, who declined a re-election as President.

ANNUAL REPORT.

In presenting to the Massachusetts Colonization Society the Thirty-third Annual Report of the transactions and events in which the Society have been directly interested, that which touches them most nearly is the death of their excellent and esteemed Secretary, Rev. JOSEPH TRACY, D. D., whose long services had shown the incalculable value of his labors in the cause of Colonization and Christian civilization, and whose personal qualities of mind and heart had won the respect and esteem of all who knew him. Appropriate and appreciative notices of his distinguished services as an officer of the Association, and his worth as a man, have been made by the Executive Committee of the National Society, and been published in the organ of that Society, which render it unnecessary on this occasion to do more than to bear testimony to the grateful respect which the members of this Society bear to his memory, while they record how much the cause in which they

are engaged is indebted for its success to the wisdom and devotion of his earnest labors.

This Society also has to lament the loss of two other of its members, whose character and influence lent an efficiency and importance to their support of the scheme of Colonization. The Hon. REUBEN A. CHAPMAN, Chief Justice of the Supreme Judicial Court of Massachusetts, had been too long and too generally known in this community to need any other sketch or notice of his claims upon the grateful respect of the public than his name, and the private worth and public services associated with it. If the Society have lost the benefit of his countenance and counsel, they have the memory of what he has been and what he has done for the cause in which they are engaged, to encourage them to persevere in the work. BENJAMIN T. REED, Esq., of Boston, though less known in public life, had made himself conspicuous by his noble benefactions and liberal charities to religious, educational, and benevolent purposes, from the fruits of a life of active and intelligent enterprise in business; and his loss has been a source of public sorrow and regret. He was also one of the Trustees of Donations for Education in Liberia, who have, in common with this Society, occasion to cherish a grateful memory of his interest in their united efforts to rescue Africa from barbarism.

By an arrangement entered into between the American and Massachusetts Colonization Societies in February, 1870, the service of collecting moneys for aiding the cause of Colonization within the limits of Massachusetts was assumed by the National Society, without affecting thereby the relation in which, as a State Society, the Massachusetts should stand to the American Society. Under this arrangement the American Society acknowledges the receipt of \$2,099.11 from Massachusetts during the year ending April 30, 1874. When, therefore, the death of the late Secretary terminated his useful and invaluable services, it became a matter of deliberation and inquiry on the part of some of the friends of Colonization in this vicinity how far it was expedient and desirable to continue the organization of the Massachusetts Society, and a free consultation was had at an informal meeting as to the

course to be pursued in view of the change in its condition. It was concluded by general assent that it would be best to continue the organization, in order to bring its members more immediately in communication with the National Society, to keep alive a more direct local interest in its success than might be otherwise felt, and to have a known and responsible body of the friends of the enterprise duly organized and authorized to receive and disburse any gifts by legacies or otherwise which liberal and public-spirited individuals might be willing to contribute. It was, furthermore, thought best to avoid all local expenses of rents and salaries; and they were fortunate enough to find in Mr. J. C. Braman a gentleman who was willing to act as Secretary of the Society without compensation, and he was accordingly chosen to supply the vacancy occasioned by the death of Dr. Tracy. It will be for the Society to determine whether this course, which has the approbation of the Managers, shall be adopted as the action of the Society.

But while the Managers recommend this change of the details in the mode of conducting the affairs of the Society, they would not be understood as implying thereby any abatement of their interest in the purposes for which it was organized, or any supposition or belief that the importance of these has become or is becoming any less than it ever has been. So far from that, they were never more strongly impressed than they now are that the cause of Colonization is the cause of Christian civilization, and can never cease to be an object of living interest and importance till Africa shall not only be redeemed from slavery, but made free in the light and liberty of Christian revelation.

It took its rise from the existence of slavery in the United States, and in fifty-two years has succeeded in planting upon the soil of Africa a Republic of freemen, governing themselves and recognized by most of the leading nations of the globe, through which a way is opened for civilization to enter that continent.

It has shown that it is by such means, and such means alone, humanly speaking, that there is any reasonable hope of planting civil institutions, and through them of spreading

the influences which grow out of these through the interior of that continent, which has for ages been shut to their approach.

Nor has the occasion for such an agency as is offered in the scheme of Colonization ceased by the extinction of slavery, even if we confine our views to our own country. We have four millions of freemen instead of, as formerly, the same number of slaves. But merely proclaiming them free does not supply them with the education or wealth or the habits of thrift which are requisite to elevate them to the rank of social equality and capacity for self-government with intelligent American citizens. To not a few the blighting influence of prejudice and caste will ever stand in their way; and the only hope they have of ever breaking away from the restraints under which they are kept down, and rising to the dignity to which their ambition prompts them, is within some free Republic of their own race and color, like Liberia, where their powers and faculties may find consistent exercise, and their efforts meet with the reward they deserve. The number who feel the need of some such aid for their social and moral development is not small, and will grow larger as the difficulties growing out of their abnormal condition are better understood. So that the time is far distant when there will not be ample work for the Colonization Society to do, in the way of supplying worthy and excellent American citizens with the coveted means of achieving a higher manhood and a broader independence than they can ever hope to attain here. And when we remember that it is just such men as these that Liberia, and, through her, Africa needs and must have to work out the great problem of civilization, which is now being tried through what the American Colonization Society began, it is difficult to exaggerate the importance—may we not say the necessity—of continuing the agencies and activities which it has in operation.

The Republic of Liberia is small, and needs larger numbers. It is poor, and needs to have its industry and resources developed. And surrounded as it is by barbarous heathen tribes, it has to look, for the present, for aid and assistance abroad among Christian nations. But there is dan-

ger and difficulty even here, unless these can be wisely and discreetly guided by some competent agency upon the spot. Saying nothing of the variety of religious denominations who have founded missions within the Republic of Liberia, at which every one ought to rejoice as a means of disseminating Christian teaching, there is danger of the cause of common-school education suffering, unintentionally, from this very circumstance. Free, universal education lies at the very foundation of the Republic. Surrounded by savage tribes, if her children are not taught in her schools, and are suffered to grow up in ignorance, there is hardly anything of which we can conceive which will stand between them and the barbarism by which they are environed. Even in our own country, not a few have looked upon the condition of the common-schools in some of the States where the colored race outnumber the white with little apprehension. How much stronger ought this apprehension to be in a community where schools derive no aid or encouragement from traditional respect or the customs of the country. To maintain anything like an educational system in the State, it must have the sanction and support of the State in its laws and their administration. Now, from the reports of these various missions in Liberia, we are led to believe that the chief of part of the school education furnished to the children and youth of Liberia is supplied through the instruction given by persons in the employment of these missions. And the consequence, we are informed, is what might naturally be expected: so long as people from abroad will contribute the means of keeping up schools, the people of Liberia will not tax themselves to maintain them. A change in this respect, such as might be hoped for if Liberia were more populous and better developed, is one of the things to which the friends of Colonization may look forward with hope and confidence.

Among the aids and instrumentalities to which the friends of Colonization have looked for fitting and educating the people of Liberia to be a self governing, self-sustaining nation of freemen has been the College founded at Monrovia and chiefly sustained by benefactions from the United States. The importance of such an institution can hardly be over estimated.

Like the common-school, it forms a germinal principle of a free State, upon which its social and intellectual growth must, in no small degree, depend. It needs the free-school to feed it, and the State to patronize and befriended it. It must, from its very position, be the appropriate institution in which young men who are to make their influence felt in that and the surrounding community should be taught. And, though it makes no pretention to be a denominational college, it is, to say the least, a question how far, on the whole, it is expedient for any denomination seeking to christianize Africa to bring her sons to this country to be educated in an American college rather than strengthen and encourage that of Liberia by the patronage of their presence and example.

We need only add that these and other means of building up and extending the Republic, so lately the Colony, of Liberia are in harmony with and a part of the Colonization enterprise in which this Society is engaged. And so far from the occasion for it having ceased or passed by, it never made a stronger appeal to patriots, Christians, or friends of human freedom or progress than it does now. Its field was never so wide, its promise of success was never so encouraging, if good men and true will supply the means by which the agencies now in successful operation can be kept in vigorous action. To this extent, at least, the Massachusetts Colonization Society can still give efficiency to its organization.